

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A weld-on fastener for an electric contact with a weld nut, the fastener comprising:

a weld nut including:

(i) a body defining a threaded bore;

(ii) the body having a topside having a first electric contact face;

and

(iii) a bottom side having an annular axial weldment projection surrounding a cavity, the cavity having a predeterminable depth;

a screw fastenably connectable into the weld nut, the screw having a second electric contact face; and

a removable spacer ring operably clamped between and in contact with the first and second contact faces to inhibit the infusion of a coating onto the first and second contact faces, the spacer ring removable to enable an electrical contact to be coupled to the body.

2. (Previously Presented) The fastener according to claim 1, wherein the first and second electric contact faces together comprise a grounding terminal useable in a motor vehicle.

3. (Original) The fastener according to claim 1, wherein the spacer ring comprises an elastic material, the elastic material including polyethylene.

4. (Original) The fastener according to claim 1, wherein the spacer ring comprises a seal operably sealing the contact faces against one of dirt and paint.

5. (Currently Amended) The fastener according to claim 1, wherein the spacer ring comprises a pre-determinable thickness substantially equal to the depth of the cavity in a fastener welded state to enable the screw to fully threadably engage the weld nut prior to the screw contacting a work piece after the removal of the spacer ring.

6. (Currently Amended) The fastener according to claim 1, comprising:
the weld nut defining an internally thread bore having an internal thread length, said weld nut having an annular weldment area which defines a non-threaded cavity; and

the screw including an external thread having an external thread length[[:]] ,

wherein the external thread length is dimensionable such that a screw end is locatable substantially flush with an internal thread end of the weld nut when the spacer ring is clamped.

7. (Original) The fastener according to claim 1, wherein an external cross sectional width of the annular axial projection is larger than a topside cross sectional width.

8. (Currently Amended) A weld-on fastener system, comprising:
a weld nut including:

(i) a first end having a flat surface forming a first electric contact face;

(ii) a second end defining a cavity formed by an annular axial weldment projection and a weldable joint formable at a distal end of the annular axial weldment projection; and

(iii) a longitudinal, female threaded aperture formable between the electric contact face and the cavity;

a screw having a male thread engageable with the female threaded aperture of the weld nut, and a head forming a second electric contact; and

a spacer ring positionable between the first and second electric contacts when the screw is engaged within the female threaded aperture, the spacer ring substantially covering both the first and second electric contacts, the spacer acting to seal the first and second electric contacts.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) The system of Claim 8, comprising a cavity depth measurable from the second end.

11. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 10, wherein the spacer ring comprises a thickness substantially equal to the cavity depth to enable the screw to fully threadably engage the weld nut prior to the screw contacting a work piece after the removal of the spacer ring.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for forming a weld-on fastener, the weld-on fastener including a weld nut having a first electric contact face and a cavity formable at an opposed end of the weld nut from the first electric contact face, the method comprising:

extending a female aperture through the weld nut;

defining a non-threaded cavity co-axial with the aperture;

threading the aperture;

positioning a spacer ring in contact with the first electric contact face;

inserting a male threaded screw a first time through the spacer ring until the screw threadably engages with the female threaded aperture;

fastenably engaging the screw into the weld nut until both a second electric contact face of the screw and the first electric contact face of the weld nut oppositely seat with the spacer ring; **[[and]]**

welding the weld nut to a surface;

~~apply~~ applying paint to the weld nut;

removing the spacer ring after the application of paint to the weld nut; and
threadably engaging the screw with the female aperture a second time.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 12, comprising forming an annular axial projection about the cavity.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 12, comprising controlling a thickness of the spacer ring to substantially equal a depth of the cavity.

15. (New) The method according to Claim 12, further comprising disposing an electrical contact between the first and second electric contact faces after the removal of the spacer ring.